

Bill Helps Ensure Seniors Access To Health Care

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Vern Buchanan (FL-13) voted today for legislation today to ensure that Florida senior citizens have access to health care. Buchanan helped pass a deficit-neutral "doc fix" to prevent a 25 percent reduction in reimbursement rates for physicians who treat senior citizens in Medicare.

"Senior citizens rely on Medicare to see their doctors," said Buchanan. "By providing physicians who treat Medicare patients with fair and reasonable reimbursements, this will help ensure they continue to have access to quality health care."

The Medicare and Medicaid Extenders Act of 2010 (H.R. 4994), which has passed the House and Senate extends current Medicare provider payment rates through December 31, 2011. The extension is paid for with reductions in subsidies included in the new health care law.

"Without this bill, doctors in my district would be forced to close their doors, leaving over 100,000 seniors without Medicare," said Buchanan.

"I am hopeful that the President will sign this bi-partisan compromise into law before January 1st."

Buchanan noted that the bill is also important to Veterans as Tricare's payments are linked to this payment system.

According to the American Medical Association, 3.3 million Medicare patients and 680,033 Tricare patients in Florida will be helped by the bill which prevents a loss of \$2.05 billion for the care of elderly and disabled patients in Florida.